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ABSTRACT

A feminist critique of development literature, with specific sub-Saharan examples, shows that development studies and projects are rooted in Western male world views. Researchers, guided by prevailing theory, ask questions about power, control, work, and social life from the point of view of the powerful, i.e., the men. Male research subjects tell their side of the story and interpret female behavior from their perspective. Development studies generally lack appropriate technical and conceptual tools with which to study women's positions in society. It is crucial to the advancement of women and of feminist scholarship and to the successful outcome of development that the question of the subordination of women be considered by researchers and that feminist scholars be familiar with the development literature. By teaching about women in development, educators can make students aware of the complexity and variety as well as the universality that characterize humanity and force them to reevaluate assumptions, models, and paradigms. A 2-part bibliography concludes this paper. (RM)

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Why Women: Reflections on the need to emphasize women in teaching about development

by

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At the annual meeting of the National Women's Studies Association in June, Florence Howe spoke of the need to internationalize the women's studies curriculum (1983). She noted that women's studies and international studies tend to be rather isolated fields. Although both are interdisciplinary, they are outside the mainstream of academia; marginalized, which gives their practitioners broader, more critical perspectives, but ghettoized, which limits their opportunities to communicate with the mainstream and with each other.

The study of development is a subfield within international studies, women in development is a subfield within women's studies; ghettos within ghettos. There is a substantial body of relevant literature, but it tends to reach a highly select audience that has already been sensitized. Recent general reviews of development literature (e.g. Portes, 1976; Hermassi, 1978; Chirot and Hall, 1982) make no mention of either the theoretical or empirical materials on women. Similarly, many who write and teach about North American women have limited knowledge of the world context within which we live.

Assuming that at this roundtable I am speaking to both the curious and the converted, I will try to develop a number of themes. I will briefly summarize the feminist critique of the general development literature, and comment on the importance of teaching about women in courses about development and of teaching about development in courses about women.

I will emphasize sub-Saharan African examples because of my own interests and field experience, and because this area has yielded a substantial volume of material exhibiting great variety. For the benefit of those interested in pursuing the study of women and development, I have included a bibliography which, while not exhaustive, is more extensive than the materials explicited cited herein.

I would like to begin with a fable; it is based on a Garri tale as elaborated by others and retold by anthropologist Christine Obbo in her book African Women (1980, Pp. ix-x):

> Once upon a time very long ago, God needed someone to help him with something he wanted done. He turned to the women, who already had their hands full even in those days. Just then they were making milk jugs and water basins and mats to cover the huts. God summoned them: 'Come here: I shall send you out on an important mission.' The women replied: 'Yes, we are coming but wait a moment, we shall finish our work here.' After a while, God summoned them again, and the women responded once more: 'Wait a moment, we are nearly done. Let us finish our mats and jugs.'
>
> Men at that time did not have to milk the cows, build houses, fetch wood and water as the women did; their only duty was now and again to put up a fence to protect the livestock. So, since at that moment they had nothing else to do, they came running at God's call and said, 'Send us instead, Father.'
>
> Then God turned to the women and said: 'Hereafter, women, your chores will never be done; when one is completed, the next one will be waiting for you. Hence the men may rest since they came at once when I called, but you, women, will have to work and toil with neither pause nor rest till the day you die.' And so it has been ever since.
>
> Time passed. Then one day some strangers came with books, seeds and guns. The men who had been resting embraced the strangers amidst protests from the women that the newcomers were going to harm the land and its people. Certainly their political and economic ideas soon divided the men into two groups--leaders and toilers. The latter had to be taught the dignity of labour by being required to pay taxes. As for the women, they just worked away unnoticed by anyone.
>
> In the end, the women appealed to the good sense of their sons, brothers and husbands to compensate and reward them for their labour. But the men reminded them that God had condemned them to be the servants of the human species. They claimed that even the books of the strangers confirmed that women's place was indeed under men. Some of the women grumbled that 'the hardest of penalties is to be poor and also a woman.' Others searched around for alternatives that would open up some kind of remedy for them. It was not long

> before the women realized that society depended upon them for its perpetuation and sustenance, and they became determined to bargain with these discoveries to acquire a share in the decisions regarding their labour and sexuality. The women's strongest assets were their hands--which, in some cases, enabled them to accumulate property in the form of land. But this made the men furious for it was now evident that property represented relationships between people and not between people and things.
>
> The men accused the women of getting out of control. And the women escaped to the cities determined to support themselves by hard work. Men then accused the women who were demanding an equal share in society's resources and power of weakening the common struggle against the strangers who controlled the world. Men claimed that women were diverting energy from the task of national development.
>
> The women only smiled, for they had broken the spell of God's condemnation. It was a beginning. Their immediate concern was to lessen the private pains inflicted upon them. And some even dared to hope for a movement whose primary task would be to lessen the institutional pain inflicted upon women by dismantling the structures of male dominance.

Feminist Criticism of Development Literature

An important component of the feminist critique of development teaching, theory and practice derives from the fact that feminist scholarship[1] has evolved in the 1970s, as the social sciences have moved toward more interpretive paradigms. These newer paradigms reject the notion that there is one empirically and independently verifiable objective reality, in favor of a view that grants situational validity to a variety of perceptions and sees the social world as emergent and negotiated (Douglas, et al, 1980; Tudor, 1982). From this perspective feminist writers point out that much of the development literature, whether of the older modernization school or the newer world systems approach, is rooted in western male world views (e.g. Blumberg, 1976; Pala, 1977; Elliott, 1977; Nash, 1980; Papanek, 1981). Even female writers and change agents from third world societies have adopted these views.

For example, Eugene Bortei-Doku, head of the Department of Agricultural Extension at the University of Ghana writes:

> A traditional farmer can be defined as a man, or more accurately a family complex, who uses traditional tools and controls a piece of land on which the entire family depends for survival. He is an expert in his own environment, growing about a half-dozen crops year after year through his whole career. He tends to be suspicious of innovations from outsice, especially when they affect crops that he has grown all his life. (1981:40)

Edouard Saouma, Director-General of the UN Food and Agricultural Organization correctly observes that discussions of rural women have been:

> . . . limited to adding a paragraph on the situation of women to development plans conceived and implemented without including them. (1981:25)

I would be more confortable with this observation if it were not contained in the only two paragraphs of a four page article that mention women.

As June Nash says in a paper prepared for a conference on women in Latin America:

> Social scientists have played the role of ideologues, sustaining the notion of progress implied in modernization and development, and perpetuating the social structures constrictive of women's participation in economic, social, and political life. Their "objective" analyses in fact reinforce stereotypes of women as wives, mothers, and lovers, even when these roles are acted on a stage where the props--the male as protector and breadwinner--are gone. Women socialized with male models of how to perceive the world have con-

> tributed to the errors and fantasies in the persisting mythology of sex roles and social structures. They have proved their ability by conforming to the models of reality structured by establisheo figures in the field and on the basis of criteria set by men. These include making objective statement of social reality; divorcing the personal perspective from the subject of discourse, eliminating empathetic understanding from observation; and accepting the terms of universal discourse without recognizing the particularistic elements that influence the field of observation. By accepting these rituals rules, women become honorary members in the men's house of social science discourse. (1980:2-3)

Two categories of male views are relevant here, those of researchers and theorists, and those of research subjects. Researchers, guided by prevailing theory, ask questions about power, about control, about work and about social life from the point of view of the powerful. They tend to assume that male ways of doing things are societal norms and that the meanings men attach to individuals, events or objects (e.g. children, work, or money) are the only possible meanings. For example, in most discussions of job skills or human capital, those individuals who have mastered techniques they are expected to use only in their employment situation are considered more highly skilled. Because women are expected to care for children and do housekeeping chores in everyday life, paid work involving these skills is considered unskilled work. The assessment is not based on actual skill mastery or on an analysis of the skills required to perform the tasks assigned to, say, a child care center worker or a hotel chambermaid (L. K. Howe, 1977).

Male research subjects tell their side of the story and interpret female behavior from their perspective. In many ethnographic reports what women do

and say is presented as tangential to ongoing social processes. Such a view may reflect male ignorance of the real content of female roles and discourse, or it may be a culturally accepted way of reinforcing an ideology of male superiority. Susan Wright (1981) reports that among the sequestered and supposedly powerless married women of Dashman Ziari in Iran, arguments often reflect tensions that their husbands, as close male kin, are prohibited from making overt, and that interactions frequently elicit information that men can use in their culturally central quests for status in the community.

A second area of criticism is that development studies generally lack appropriate technical and conceptual tools with which to study women's positions in society (e.g. Benería, 1981; 1982b; Croll, 1981a; Papenek, 1977). Most measures of economic growth or laborforce participation assume the validity of such distinctions as paid labor vs. unpaid family labor, production for exchange value vs. production for use value, production vs. reproduction[2], public vs. private sphere, and modern vs. traditional sector. For example, Chase-Dunn (1975) uses the percentage of the male labor force not engaged in agriculture as the basic indicator of development in a major cross national study and Tinker (1976) cites a 1973 U.S. Dept. of Labor statement that only 5% of African women work. Even Ester Boserup whose 1970 book was one of the first challenges to the androcentric view of development takes for granted the division between productive and reproductive work (see the critical evaluation by Benería and Sen, 1981). The underlying vision here is of men engaged in wage labor or production of crops or goods for sale (paid labor, exchange value, production in the public sphere of the modern sector) and of women engaged in food production and preservation, and crafts for family use (unpaid family labor, use value, reproduction in the private sphere, traditional sector).

People's real lives are not so neatly divisable. Maria Mies' study of lace makers in India (1982) shows the extent to which this so called spare time craft work of secluded unpaid family workers has provided paid work for men who can move about freely collecting and exporting the lace and selling the materials needed for its manufacture. Secluded Hausa women in nothern Nigeria maintain a thriving market in prepared food from behind the walls of their houses (Schildkrout, 1983). In African cultures where women are not secluded, they market their own crafts or surpluses from household plots. However, the amount of land devoted to cash crops and the agricultural technology involved may infringe on the time and resources available to these unpaid family workers. Papers presented by Tinker, Seidman and Fortmann at the 1979 AAAS symposium and reprinted in the volume edited by Dauber and Cain (1981) are replete with concrete examples.

Because domestic or subsistence work is not defined as production, those issues that are most relevant to women and home life are often subsumed under the heading of health and welfare programs. Such programs are often seen as less pressing than those designated economic development projects (Rogers, 1980). Essentially one might say, using world systems' terminology, that women and the issues that most directly impinge on their lives have become the periphery, the underdeveloped area within the underdeveloped parts of the world system (Boulding, 1981).

Here is a case in point: traveling in rural Malawi in 1982 I heard the same story over and over from rural women, from local level development workers and, a hopeful sign, from the staff of the agricultural college at Bunda. Maize has long been a staple of the rural diet. The white variety brought to Africa from the Americas around 1600 (Davidson, 1969) is now called traditional maize. It has been grown on a small scale as a cash crop since 1910 (Liebenow, 1982). It produces soft kernels protected by sturdy husks. These characteristics make it easy to store in homemade silos that rest on the ground, and easy to prepare by pounding. Hybrid yellow maize which is now grown as a cash crop has harder kernels and virtually no husks; local people also claim it is not as tasty as the traditional variety. This maize has characteristics which facilitate its mechanical processing. It is a profitable crop and neither farmers nor policy makers are sorry it was introduced. Attention is now being paid to how it can be stored and processed for home use. A good deal of grumbling, effort and wastage could have been avoided by focusing on both domestic and commercial uses of maize from the outset.

Moreover, as Sen (1980) notes, subsistence activities are not defined by the tasks or the genders of people engaged in them, but by a relationship to the means of subsistence. Virtually all food and income produced by poor people is used to meet immediate needs for food, clothing and shelter. In this context whether the item is grown and eaten, grown and sold to purchase food, or grown for an estate farmer who then pays a casual laborer in cash so that the laborer can buy food, is probably less important than whether the total amount of food thus acquired is adequate to provide proper nutrition.

Contemporary writers (e.g. Benería and Sen 1981; Deere and León de Leal, 1982; Benería, 1982 a & b) insist that it is necessary to acknowledge the

economic contribution to society of reproductive labor (child bearing and rearing, housekeeping, food preparation) which tends to be the women's work in all cultures, and to explore the relationships between reproduction and production under varying conditions. In this process the relative positions of women and men are clarified, the tendency to undervalue women's work because it is not renumerated is countered, more accurate data become available for planning and analysis[3], and economic activity is conceptualized as activity which contributes to the welfare of society's members rather than activity which leads to capital accumulation. Such an analysis, while rooted in an expansion of the marxist[4] concept of reproduction of labor, allows evaluation of capitalist and socialist development programs in the same terms (Benería, 1981).

Closely related to the use of inappropriate conceptual tools is the use of inappropriate target units in development research and practice. Societies are treated as if they were unified wholes or as if a given political or technological change could be expected to have a unified impact on all segments of society.

Yet, generally speaking, development strategies have altered class structures both by creating new classes and by redistributing resources, often less equitably (Stryker, 1977; Roxbough, 1979). Women and men have been differentially affected by development as well (Nash,

1980; Fortmann, 1981; Papanek, 1981; Bay, 1982). This differential impact has often been unanticipated and unrecognized, in part because the household or family, visualized as male-headed, monogamous, and nuclear has generally been the target unit for programs and the unit of analysis for evaluation (ILO, 1980; Caplan, 1981; Dey, 1981; Deere and León de Leal, 1981, 1982; Afonga, 1981).

The social organization of households varies widely both in terms of who its members are and in terms of the division of labor within the unit. As Vellenga (1983) points out with respect to traditional societies in Ghana, marriage may be a process which takes years to complete and within any one society age, class and other factors may affect the rights and obligations of marital partners to each other. Today, the influence of colonial legal systems and the western orientation of some segments of the population further complicate things (also see Oppong, 1982).

Just as what marriage entails may vary, what sort of a unit a household is may vary from culture to culture and by class within a culture. A striking example is the traditional Baule pattern where, especially among higher status families wife and husband may each have a personal retinue of children and adults bound to them by adoption and ties of fealty. A clear sexual division of labor exists, but each partner has control over some means of production and is obligated to compensate the other for labor expended or her or his behalf. For example, women grow food crops on men's land, men weave cloth from women's cotton (Etienne, 1983).

An increase in overall household income does not automatically result in increased benefits to all household members, schemes which make credit or training exclusively available to one family member may alter the division of labor without improving the standard of living, and technological innovations may simultaneously increase women's workloads and their dependency. Here are a few of many examples.

Martha F. Loutfi notes that in rural areas:

> Wood is usually "free" - it only costs (mainly women's or children's) time and calories to collect it. Charcoal is more efficient - but it must normally be purchased. How would the cash be generated by the women who would benefit from it? Kerosene is typically beyond their financial reach . . . Male household members have little incentive to spend their limited cash on charcoal or kerosene (or solar cookers) so long as a "free" alternative is available. This again demonstrates the inadequacy of government policies that treat the household as a unit and ignore the differential impact of those policies on individual household members. (1980:40)

Ann Seidman offers several comparable examples including this one:

> In Kenya . . . the government introduced measures to organize a cooperative to acquire inputs and market pyrethrum. Disappointingly, production declined. Closer examination revealed that, although cooperative by-laws specified males, presumably the household heads, as members, the women had actually been producing the pyrethrum. Not surprisingly, the women, on discovering that payment was to be made to the male cooperative members, reduced their output. (1981:114)

And Irene Tinker draws this from a report in the International Labour Review:

> The Mwea irrigated rice scheme in Kenya did allocate small garden plots to the women, but these were small because it was assumed that rice from the irrigated plots would be added to the diet. Women in fact did receive some rice in return for her labor on her husband's land, but since the men refused to eat rice, women had to sell it and buy traditional food at increasingly high prices. Women on the scheme did not have time, nor land, to raise enough food for their own consumption. Thus they worked longer hours than before but could not provide as much food for their families as they had. In addition, they often had to buy firewood for cooking since fuel was scarce in the resettlement area, and women's time was less. Thus while the total income of the families in the scheme has gone up, and visible wealth in the form of transistor radios and bicycles is in evidence, nutritional levels nonetheless have fallen. (1981:62-63)

Nash (1980) suggests that not only specific technological or organizational innovations, but also the general direction of what is presumed to be development can have unintended negative consequences for women. Development is generally associated with a greater formalization and rationalization of decision making. Whether as modernization theorists have assumed, this is a prerequisite for or a defining characteristic of being modern, or whether it is merely a neo-colonial by-product of securing development aid, need not concern us here. What is of concern is that what power women have is often exercized informally. Where all decisions ultimately rest on consensus reached after informal discussion and negociation, everyone can be informed and can participate. When lines of authority and decision making processes are formalized, fewer individuals have access to the process and domestic and public spheres of activity are further differentiated. Both trends tend to exclude women (also see Rosaldo, 1974; Sanday, 1974).

Some nations are establishing policies which attempt to incorporate women into these newly formalized structures. Two examples from my own observations illustrate this point. President Nyerere of Tanzania is

ideologically committed to full equality of power and resources. To this end he uses his constitutional right to appoint some members of the national legislature to supplement the number of women obtaining seats in general elections (Daily News). A smaller scale, but maybe more effective, instance comes from Malawi where development of water resources is a current goal. The use and maintenance of new water pumps in rural villages is entrusted to five-member committees. Both traditional and national party leadership must be represented on the committees, and, since women are the primary drawers and users of water, three of the members must be female.

An important criticism leveled at development teaching, theory and practice by proponents of the new scholarship is a criticism that can be leveled at virtually all previous scholarship, namely, that it does not have as one of its explicit aims an understanding of how women have come to be subordinated (in contrast see Bart and Budinger, forthcoming, for a state of the art overview of feminist theories; Segal and Berheide, 1979, for an overview of the scope and perspectives of feminist sociology; MacKinnon 1982, 1983, for a well reasoned presentation on the cutting edge of radical feminist theory). While development studies operate in the middle range, concerned with questions and answers which are narrower and more immediate than the basic principles of social organization, they do tacitly accept premises about social organization which may be invalid. Moreover, because students of development work in contexts in which social and cultural change are characteristic, they are likely to accumulate data which can help to test and to reformulate these premises. Thus, it is crucial to the advancement of women, to the advancement of feminist scholarship and to the successful outcome of development efforts that the question of the subordination of women be considered by students of development, and that feminist scholars be familiar with the development literature.

Varieties of Development Theories

Thus far the accent of this paper has been on feminist criticism of development theories and practices. For those who are more familiar with feminist viewpoints than with development literature, the accent can be shifted to feminist criticism of development theories. Extended discussions make finer distinctions (e.g. Chirot and Hall, 1982; Hermassi, 1978; Portes, 1976), but for purposes of this review current theories of development can be grouped in two broad categories: modernization theories and world systems theories. While both are rooted in 19th and early 20th century evolutionary premises, modernization theorists tend to have liberal, functionalist and capitalist perspectives, and world systems theorists are more likely to see the world in radical, conflict and socialist terms. Each group of theories has evoked a body of criticism. Only those points which relate specifically to understanding the position of women or including women in development will be discussed here (see Elliot, 1977; Leacock, 1981). It should be noted that there are feminist scholars who take each of these perspectives as well (see for example the criticism of Boserup, 1970, by Benería and Sen, 1981, or the review of Rogers, 1980, by Burce, 1981; also Boulding's challenging "Integration into What?" 1981).

Modernization approaches follow a strategy which has been summarized as "build on the best" (Gurley as quoted by Stryker, 1977). The goal here is to increase overall productivity in a nation as rapidly as possible by investing in those activities, areas, and segments of the population already most developed and receptive to change. The assumption is that the benefits of this development will trickle down. Since males often have, and are even more often assumed to have, more of the desired human capital factors (education, availability, motivation, experience, etc.) than females, they

are more likely to receive the training, credit, jobs or whatever is being offered by a specific project (of course there are frequently class and other differences among the males involved as well). This practice is often based on erroneous and ethnocentric assumptions about gender differences. Where the assumptions are valid (e.g. males have higher literacy rates in most developing nations) females become even more disadvantaged. Moreover, the effects do not automatically trickle down (Henderson, 1981).

Modernization approaches locate the cause of underdevelopment and the solutions to development problems within third world nations. Yet, drawing women into industrial employment, which is what feminists who take this approach advocate (e.g. Boserup, 1970; Rogers, 1980) does not necessarily better the position of women. Catherine M. di Domenico's research on factory workers in Ibadan (1983) suggests that the same kinds of labor markets are developing in third world industrial sectors as in the first world. Women work at a limited number of jobs, i.e. the less skilled ones, in a limited number of industries, e.g. food processing. According to di Domenico, in the short run at least, the employment opportunities for women are decreasing as protective legislation and benefits for pregnant and lactating women increase the costs of employing women in a nation where not all of the males have been drawn into the industrial labor force (also see Standing, 1977; Shields, 1980). Moreover, industrial employment for women in developing nations really depends on the demands of the world economy (see the growing number of detailed empirical studies e.g. Chinchilla, 1979; Srinivasan, 1981; Lim, 1981; Safa, 1981; Wong, 1981; Arizpe and Aranda, 1981; et al).

World systems approaches locate the causes of underdevelopment in the world capitalist system within which developed and developing nations must operate. The markets for coffee, sisal, or pyrethrum are world markets, and

the local price of petroleum is not determined by the size of the local skilled laborforce. General expositions of world systems theory (e.g. Wallerstein, 1974, 1979; or the session called "Comparative International Dependence, Inequality and Development" presented here on Thursday) are on the macrosystem level and do not concern themselves with class or gender differences any more than modernization theories do. Feminists assert that those world systems analyses which are sensitive to class differences, like many other social scientific analyses inspired by marxist frames of reference, tend to subordinate gender differences to class differences. Such analyses undervalue activities associated with social reproduction, use the household as the basic unit of analysis and tenaciously cling to Engels' untenable position that patriarchy is simply a product of capitalism (Elliott, 1977; Hartmann and Markusen, 1980; MacKinnon, 1982, 1983).

Feminists refute this position with analyses of women in second world economies and third world nations which have chosen socialist models of development (e.g. Caplan, 1982; Fortmann, 1982; Cross, 1981 a & b; First-Dilić, 1980, Lapidus, 1978, et al). Subsaharan Africa is an ideal focal point for research comparing the impact on women of capitalist and socialist development models because many other variables can be held relatively constant. For example, Kenya and Tanzania, geographically contiguous, British influenced, and politically stable since becoming independent have chosen different development routes. A less obvious comparison is Tanzania with Malawi where both nations have emphasized rural development over urban industrial growth, but following ideologically different plans. Feminist world systems-inspired research looks explicitly at the varying relations of production by gender within households (e.g. Etienne, 1983),

classes and communities (e.g. Gordon, 1981 on the effects of male labor migration in Lesotho) and over time (e.g. Deere and León de Leal, 1982, a Latin American example). The data indicate that integrating an economy into the world system may either draw women into production or remove them from it, depending upon the needs of the system at any point in time. The relations between women and men may be transformed in this process, but the nature of the transformation is not necessarily obvious or predictable on the basis of current theoretical formulations.

Summary of Criticism

Feminist critics of development teaching, theory and practice argue that development studies and projects have been characterized by an androcentric and ethnocentric vision of the world, that the conceptual and methodological tools of development literature provide a limited and distorted picture of third world realities, that inappropriate units have been used to predict, plan and analyse development efforts, and that these efforts have often had unintended and unrecognized negative consequences for women regardless of their impact on other segments of society.

Feminist criticism and expansion of development theory and practice has implications for how we think about and teach about first and second world societies as well. It is to these implications that I will now turn briefly.

Implications

Both modernization and world systems theories are evolutionary, building on the work of 19th and early 20th century sociologists and anthropologists who believed the social world was destined to grow more complex, differentiated and rational, that relationships would become more secondary, and that affect and tradition would decrease in importance or be relegated to the peripheral spheres of institutional life. Evolutionary theory was not monolithic--

theorists varied in their attitudes toward the world they saw emerging, and they varied according to which forces and processes they saw as primary and which as derivative--but it was unilinear in direction and general outline if not in terms of specific steps or stages. This perspective produces blind spots, tendencies to think that structural and institutional arrangements that exist and cohere in industrial societies are natural, the products of necessary developments or an obvious improvement over past arrangements. These visions hold sway even among those who see development in some parts of the world as both cause and consequence of underdevelopment in others.

Taking a feminist perspective without focusing attention on times or places other than our own also has limitations. While our own research and our own experience tell us that the system we live in is generating inequities, we need to see other systems, other relations of production, in order to put ours in perspective and to develop an understanding of how systems work.

By examining the positions of women and men in developing societies we become aware of the variety of institutional arrangements that are possible, and of the nature of the relationships among them. The interaction between biology and social arrangements, and the roles of ideology and of material factors are placed in relief. We miss important connections and arrangements if we look at only half the population. By looking at societies from the perspective of the less powerful, we come to redefine power by discovering its alternative sources and routes and to appreciate the fact that there are differences in interests even within the smallest groups in a system. In developing societies the relationships between production and reproduction are highlighted and the interdependence of subsistence and other forms of production can be clarified. The understanding thus gained can be used to reexamine first and second world societies.

Renée Pittin's research on the gidajen mata or houses of women in Katsina City, Nigeria (1983) illustrates the scope of my claims about the variety of institutional arrangements. In this alternative lifestyle, unattached Hausa women (Karuwai) share these residences with their children, and with gay, bisexual and transvestite men who frequently serve as mediators between them and the patriarchal Muslim society in which they live. In choosing this lifestyle women gain the power and resources to move in or out of marriage as independent human beings.

There are simple answers to why teach about women in development: a little over half the world's population is female, and the third world is most of the world. Then there is the Percy Amendment[5]; since 1973 U.S. Foreign Assistance programs have been mandated to include women. There are also complex answers. Students tend to accept the models we present to them as valid and normative, but the models of social life and social systems upon which most development teaching and activity rest are distorted. They are based on definitions of work, production and family that discount the individuality, interests and contributions of women. They assume that only rational action is important, that only one course of action is rational and that only one set of factors motivates rational people. They even assume there is only one source of exploitation and one direction for social change.

Much of the work women do is less visable and we are accustomed to thinking of it as less important because it does not appear in national statistics or occur in the town square. Models which are based on wage or profit making work are concerned with the work of social reproduction only to the extent that it facilitates production. They ignore other characteristics of reproductive work such as how it is assigned, what it accomplishes

(apart from producing and sustaining workers qua workers) what tools are used to perform it, and who controls these tools.

Because we associate reproductive labor with women and women's work with invisability, all of women's work is rendered invisable. Studies of male workers in industrial nations are taken to be studies of all industrial employees (Inkles did study auto workers in developing nations, but they were all male, see Inkles and Smith, 1974). We do not learn whether the industries which employ women are organized differently, or if the people who work in them behave differently. We are ignorant of the facts surrounding industrial employment of females in the third world. We assume that employed women are becoming more modern, or are being proletarianized, but on what basis, and what does that mean in terms of women's lives?

A case in point is the relationship between employment and fertility. Some assume birth rates will decrease as employment increases (e.g. Youssef, 1976), others (e.g. Shields, 1980) that fertility rates are the independent variable. Either way, a correlation is predicted based on the experiences of western societies where the kinds of non-industrial productive activities of women and the mutual obligations of women and children are not necessarily the same as those among any given third world people (cf. di Domenico, 1983).

In sum, when we teach about women in development, we make students aware of the complexity and variety as well as the universality that characterizes humanity, and we are forced to reevaluate our assumptions, our models and our paradigms and to bring them closer to the point where they can help us to fit together the multifaceted puzzle that is social life.

FOOTNOTES

1. Florence Howe lists the following major components of the new scholarship on women:

   1. an understanding of patriarchy in historical perspective; philosophically and sociologically; its relationship to the religions of the world, and to ideas of knowledge and power--hence, an understanding of what it means to be born "permanently" into a subordinate or dominant status, a knowledge of feminist theory.
   2. an understanding of the complex, confusing, and still chaotic area of biological/psychological sex differences; the importance of null findings.
   3. an understanding of socialization and sex roles, as well as of sex-role stereotyping; the relationships among gender, race, and class--all from a cross-cultural perspective.
   4. an understanding of women in history, not only in the United States, but throughout the world; recognizing that such study includes legal as well as medical history--the history of birth control, for example, is essential to the study of women, even to the study of fiction about women.
   5. an understanding of women as represented in the arts they have produced, some of which have been buried or ignored as arts--quilt-making, for example, or the pottery of North American Indian women; and as represented in the significant literature by women in all races and nationalities that never was included in the literary curriculum; as well as an awareness that the

images of women portrayed by the male-created arts have helped to control the dominant conceptions of women--hence, the importance of studying images of women on TV, in the film and the theatre, and in advertising.

6. an understanding of the ways in which post-Freudian psychology has attempted to control women's destiny; an awareness that other male-centered psychological constructs like those of Erikson and Kohlberg are potentially damaging to women; an understanding of new women-centered theories of female development.
7. an understanding of female sexuality, including perspectives on both heterosexuality and lesbianism; special issues involved in birth control and reproduction.
8. an understanding of the history and function of education as support and codifier of sex-segregation and of limited opportunities for women; some perspectives on education as an agent for change in the past and present.
9. an understanding of the history and function of the family in the United States and cross-culturally; of the current variety of family structures, and of the conflict between beliefs and research findings with reference especially to issues surrounding childcare.
10. an understanding of women in the work force through history, in the present, and cross-culturally; the economy in relation to women; the relationship between money and power in personal interactions, in the family, and in society.

11. an understanding of the relationship between laws affecting women and social change; the history of women and social movements. (1982:12-13)

2. Many writers use reproduction in its narrowest sense: child bearing. Others recognize the importance of social reproduction in its narrower sense: child rearing, housekeeping, i.e. those tasks which reproduce the family and the workforce. Recently attention has been paid to the ways in which social systems are reproduced and sustained by social institutions and the development of certain relations of production (e.g. Benería, 1979).

3. Admittedly it is currently difficult to obtain data for secondary analysis that includes subsistence and informal sector productivity, but it is not impossible to develop measures and gather data if the need is recognized. I want to thank Edwin S. Segal for reminding me of the extent to which our thinking about work is structured by our data.

4. While I do not accept MacKinnon's position (1982, 1983) in its entirety, I have adopted her practice of spelling marxism with a lower case 'm' to indicate that the term denotes a theoretical perspective parallel to feminism, or, for that matter, functionalism.

5. Amendment no. 574 to the Foreign Assistance Bill of 1973, SB 2335, see Congressional Record S. 18423, Oct. 2, 1973.

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